





# BRUCE POLLACK



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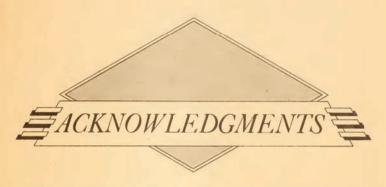
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y now you've heard the word and felt the fever. In newspapers and magazines, on radio and TV, in movies and advertisements, on city buses and airplanes buzzing the beach, the word is always the same-disco-and the fever is spreading.

Just like sock hops in the malt shops of the fifties, folk music in the protest marches of the sixties, superstar rock in the concert halls of the seventies, disco has become more than just music. For all those whose hearts pound to a disco beat, it is an identity, an image, a



ennis Barna/Globe Photos

crowd, and a scene in one package. It is the melting pot for the eighties—the ultimate fantasy fun experience.

At the disco you will have a chance to fashion your own disguise, to try on identities by the closetful until you find one that fits. You can dress up or dress down. You can wear long hair or short hair. You can dance through changes in mood and personality without ever missing a beat. Not only that, it's fun.

And so, even if you don't know the steps, even if you've never danced before—dare to go. Remember, as a handy place to mingle with the opposite sex, as an exhilarating form of exercise, as a terrific way of working off nervous energies, as a nearby place of fantasy, cheaper than the movies, the disco is great.



de World Photos



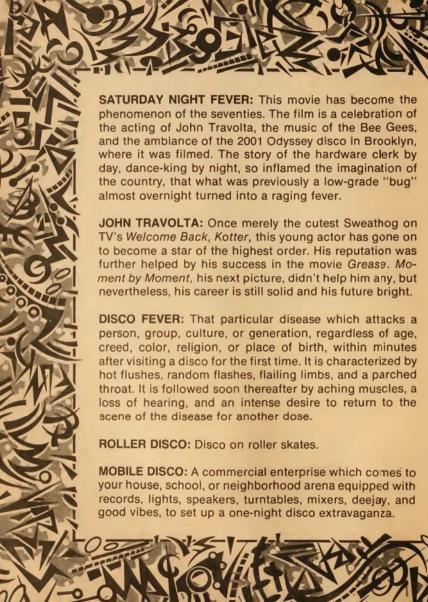
Any new craze worth the hysteria that disco has created must have its own specialized language—a slang vocabulary known only to insiders, making them feel more in.

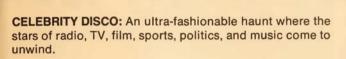
The disco craze is no exception, coming equipped with an assortment of colorful words and expressions to match the colorful, high-gloss fabrics worn at the discothèque. Within the vocabulary you will also find a bunch of familiar old words which have been given new life by the disco kids who use them to add shape and meaning to their world.

DISCO: 1) That phenomenon of the late-seventies, wherein the bandstand dances of the fifties, the light shows of the sixties, and the dress-up nostalgia of the seventies combine to form a multimedia, all-encompassing, bizarre, sci-fi, total-environment.

2) The music, the place, the dance, the scene, and the craze.

**DISCOTHEQUE:** What the French, who invented it, call the disco. Literally, a record library.





STUDIO 54: The ultimate chic hangout, where the sheer beauty of the beautiful people assembled therein is enough to blind you.

**DEEJAY:** That otherwise silent general at the hub of every disco, who creates the mood by the smooth manipulation of the disco discs.

**BEAT:** 1) The constant, throbbing engine which keeps the disco in perpetual motion.

How you will begin to feel after about forty-five minutes of continuous disco dancing.

AMBIANCE: The sum total of the music, mood, mist, and people at a particular disco.

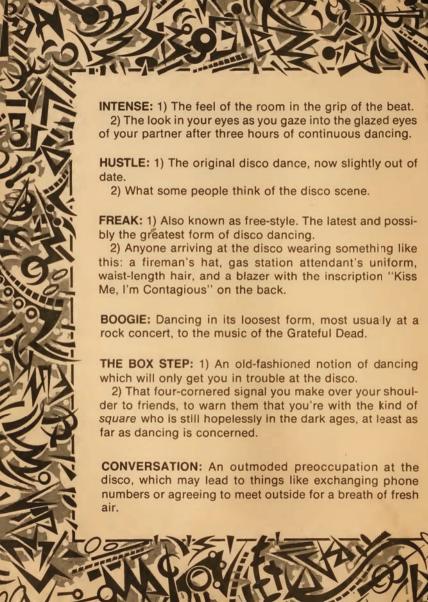
**HEAVY:** 1) A person who tries to start a serious conversation at a disco.

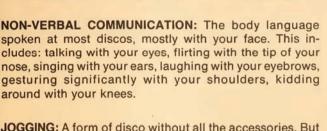
2) The subject of the conversation (in descending order of heaviness: parents, inflation, the Middle East, rock & roll, and yesterday's homework).

**FUNKY:** 1) The kind of rhythm and blues designed to cause one to break out in cold sweats.

2) The collected aroma of the disco—with sweat, tears, makeup, hairspray, and perfume mingling with the moisture of bodies all gasping for breath in the darkness.

Illustration by Doug Taylor





JOGGING: A form of disco without all the accessories. But you still get to show off your style, fashion sense, social awareness, and general hipness.

**FOG:** 1) That mystifying mist produced by machines at some discos, which do so much to murk up the face of your partner.

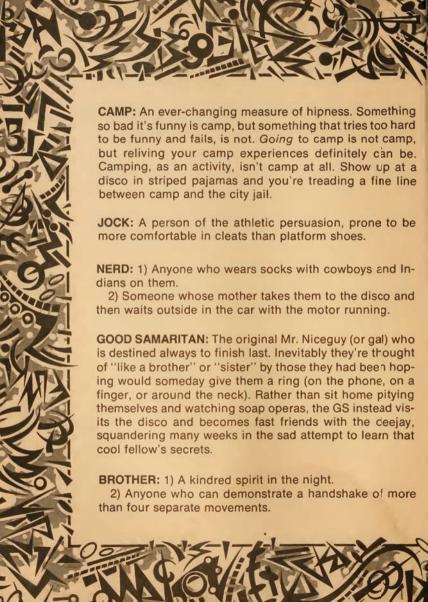
2) What you will be in after seven hours of continuous dancing.

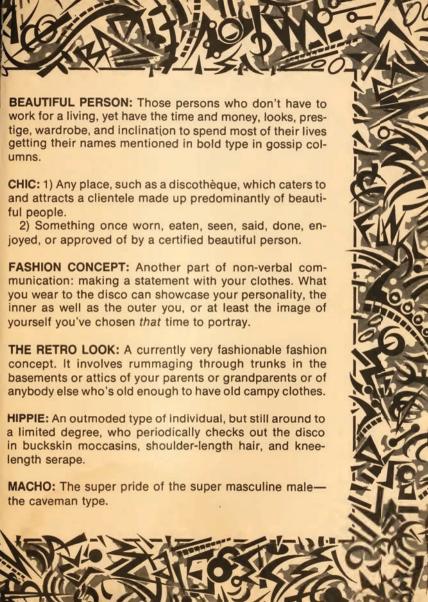
**KINETIC ENERGY:** A substance produced by the nervous system when it interacts with the myriad effects of the disco.

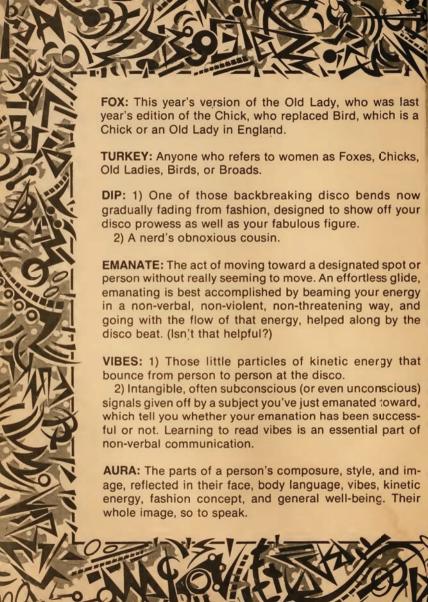
**ANDY WARHOL:** 1) The chicest of the chic, the grandfather of pop-art, pop-culture, and pop-corn.

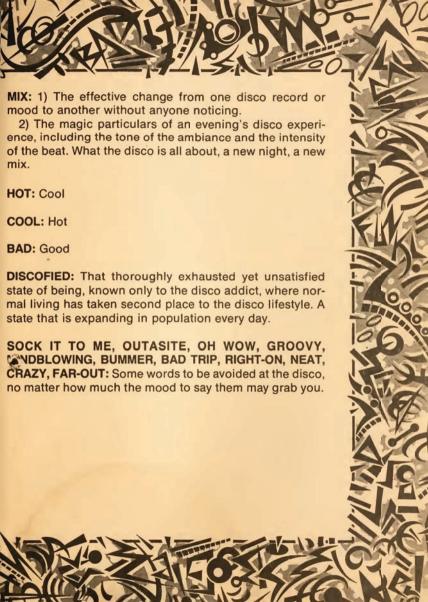
 Several incarnations ago, a pop-art painter who became famous for his rendition of a Campbell's soup can, and later remained famous for being famous.

 Coiner of the concept that everyone will be famous for fifteen minutes. At the disco this concept reaches its realization.











A bout now, you may be asking yourself: why disco? People have always danced to music, so what's all the fuss? Sure, Saturday Night Fever is the biggest selling album of all time, but would it have sold half as much without the movie? And would the movie have scored as mightily as it did without big John Travolta? Isn't disco just another fad about to burst its bubble?

Those are all wonderful questions. And, to be sure, there is a devoted band of rock and roll loyalists praying nightly to Dick Clark to save and preserve their treasured music. But disco is achieving such widespread popularity precisely because it fills a need among disenchanted teenagers. It gives them what they've been searching for. What, you may ask, have teenagers been searching for? Basically, one or more of the following:

Identity
Participation
Romance
A cure for loneliness
Fun
The latest in technology

Fantasy/Escape/Release Sophistication A return to the old values

# **IDENTITY**

The kids of the late seventies had been reminded once too often by the kids of the sixties that, as a generation, they were just not with it. Where the generation of the sixties had long hair, Chicago, and Woodstock, the products of the seventies had nothing to clearly call their own. They desperately needed a kind of shared activity, scorned by their elders, which would bring them together as a group. At the disco they have forged a generational banner. It's great to feel special at last.



(aminski/Globe Ph

# **PARTICIPATION**

The disco is made up of lots of folks who are just plain sick and tired of the big business machine called rock and roll. They're no longer willing to stand on line in the rain for six hours to purchase \$15.00 tickets to see a half hour set by their favorite superstar act, from the 80th row of Madison Square Garden. Rather they'll head for their neighborhood disco, where they can be the show. At the disco, everybody is a Star as long as they can stay on their feet.

# ROMANCE

At the disco, romantic feelings are play-acted more than real. In other words, you may flirt all night, but you do so in the midst of a protective crowd. People sometimes show up in daring costumes, but they dance ten feet apart. In the disco, romance is all in the mind and the music. Instead of a broken heart, you only get sore feet.

# **LONELINESS**

At the disco you can be with your friends in a hassle-free environment. Just seeing so many familiar faces week after week (even if you never speak to anyone) is better than being alone. It's bet-



SOIGH AGO

ter than becoming addicted to soap operas or collecting butterflies. There's something about sharing an intense physical experience with a group that makes you feel a closeness to all of humanity.

### **FUN**

For a lot of disco freaks it's no more difficult than that. Where else can you find such a fun combination: lights, action, screaming crowds, familiar happy music? You get to wear yourself out. You get to make a lot of noise. You get to show off. The volume is way, way up. The people are far, far out. That's certainly not the way it is in your house, is it?



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# **TECHNOLOGY**

You saw Star Wars eleven times, Close Encounters six. Now you get to live it every week! Many discos come equipped with lights that burst into prisms, rain, snow, and fog machines, rocket ships that hang from the ceiling. Science is continually at work on newer and more intricate systems designed to increase the sensory pleasures of the disco. Best of all, you're in the middle of it.



de World P

# FANTASY/ESCAPE/RELEASE

By day you might feel like a hitch in the great scheme of things, an extra, an odd lot, an irregular. You may have a funny walk, unusual hair. You may have to stand there and take orders, or sit there and take notes. But at night, at the disco, under the cover of darkness and noise, you get to kick off your shoes, kick up your heels, kick in your inhibitions, and kick out the jams. Dressed in a

fantasy costume of your own creation, you can close your eyes and just sink into the music. At the disco it's possible to forget the real world exists. It's possible to forget your partner exists. It's even possible to forget you exist. Now how are you going to do that at the local pizzeria?



# SOPHISTICATION

There's a fashion parade strolling past the gates of the disco. Women in glamorous fabrics. Men in white suits (to be distinquished from the men in the white suits, who will probably be arriving later, with their butterfly nets and padded jackets). Just in nobbing a while with the hobs from Snob Hill, you can move your own sophistication quotient up a few notches.

# TRADITIONAL VALUES

Whether it's two guys or a whole football team attempting to outdress, outfinesse, or outdance each other, the disco has, it seems, become a showplace for the return to free expression of the male ego. Witness the spectacle of several otherwise intelligent guys vying for the attention of every eye in the place with all sorts of splits, tumbles, headstands, and Olympian swan-dive dips. What keeps them going is good old masculine pride. Many females at the disco respond to masculine pride (macho) like sweethearts sending their conquering heroes off to war. They thrill to basking in the reflected light of their knights in shiny armor. If you're a female who hates the macho type you'd better prepare yourself before entering the disco.





ontrary to popular opinion, John Travolta did not invent disco. He merely discovered it, or it discovered him, in the movie Saturday Night Fever, about the activities in and around one particular Brooklyn disco. Granted, the Beautiful Sweathog has done much to fan the flames of the current disco craze; it may come as a shock that good old disco has been here once before. (Dancing itself, as you know, has always been with us, and goes all the way back, probably to the day the first caveman got his toes a little too close to the fire.)

In 1962 a fellow named Chubby Checker had about half the known world practicing a dance called the Twist in front of their bedroom mirrors with a bath towel, twisting themselves into the shape of a pretzel as they simulated the movements of strenuous drying. New Yorkers would line up each night in front of a tiny dive called the Peppermint Lounge, where the house band was Joey Dee & the Starlighters. Among the surging crowds were





greasers and socialites and presidents' wives. Other clubs soon opened to handle the overflow, calling themselves discothèques, after the dance dens already operating in France. You could dance the Twist, the Fly, the Dog, the Hully Gully, the Mashed Potato, the Watusi, the Jerk, the Swim, and the Frug, among others.

The discothèque craze inaugurated a larger panic known as "the cult of youth." At places like the Electric Circus, in Greenwich Village, in the late sixties, they danced 'neath the strobes and light shows to Jimi Hendrix and Sly Stone. At the Avalon Ballroom in San Francisco they boogied with painted faces and junkyard wardrobes to the pyschedelic riffs of Jefferson Airplane and the Grateful Dead. There were no dance steps—to each his own trip.



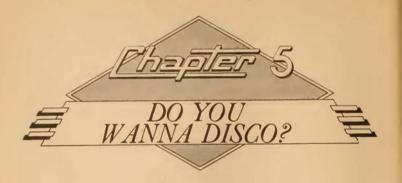
Wide World Phot

Meanwhile, with the rise of the songwriter/poet, a significant segment of the youth gave up dancing entirely. They turned inward, preferring to listen to the words of the songs written by Bob Dylan, Paul Simon, Joni Mitchell, and Cat Stevens. For a time, dancing was definitely un-hip.

But the dancers finally struck back. Enough of forty-seven minute guitar solos. Enough of Ravi Shankar. Enough of bowing down to Rod McKuen and Kahlil Gibran. These New Youth weren't interested in philosophy. Protest was a thing of the past. They wanted to get down, get serious, get clean, and drop back into the system. They wanted to get dressed up and dance!

Ultimately, of course, adults got behind the latest disco craze. Scads of socialite characters itching to get in on the action (and weeks later to wind up in traction) descended upon the hideouts of the young. But the disco, with its light shows and funky music and its cast of fashionable ladies and gentlemen—dressed like Prohibition flappers snapping gum and zoot suit Gatsbys in spats—is, after all is said and done, kind of like an American Dance Museum.

Not bad for something that originated in France.



ave pity on those who cannot dance, for they are doomed to never experience the full impact of the disco. There they are, looming along the edges of the dance floor, ogling the action and making wisecracks to their buddies. But they're really dying to learn how to move their bodies in rhythm, their feet in time, and themselves out onto center stage.

If at present you are among the undancing many who are tired of being a mere onlooker, The Disco Handbook will show you

how to get in step with your friends.

To begin with, you must learn to conquer the fear—the stubborn fear of humiliating yourself in public that has followed you ever since the day you fell off your first bicycle and skinned your knee while all your friends laughed and your father took snapshots. Nobody likes to be a beginner at anything, but you've got to start somewhere, and most people have to start at the beginning. (Sure, your cousin Alice was born doing the hustle, but forget about her.) Even the spiffed-up regulars on disco TV, whirling by so effortlessly, were once tottering on training wheels.

Another important thing to remember when you're approaching the dance floor for the first time is that no one else out there will be watching you. They're all really much too concerned with

themselves. No matter how effortless dancing may appear to be to them, there's actually so much effort being put into their effortlessness, that they couldn't have even the least dab of concentration left over to study you.



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Not only that, the disco owners of America have gone out of their way to make the disco a comfortable place for a beginner to dance in. Look, with all the swirling lights and special effects going on, no one can possibly see you clearly enough to tell how well you're dancing, or if you can dance at all! Here's an authority on the subject, Stanley "Stash" Furman, of Disco Van 2000, an organization which creates disco parties for the home, school, or wherever.

"One thing about disco music that everybody should realize is that it's a 4/4 beat. Everything works in one-two-three-four. If you can get that into your head, all of a sudden you find that the music is very simple to move to. Four to one side, four to the other. People ask me to teach them how to dance. I tell them just make believe your feet are drumsticks and follow that beat, and any-



nnis Bama/Globe Photos

thing you do with the rest of you is going to be good—it's freestyle. Disco dancing is so simple it's difficult. People think they have to do something spectacular. But, absolutely, they don't.

"Free-style is the same kind of dancing as in rock days. You do whatever you want to do. Bounce up and down to the beat, move your hands, make up your own steps as you go along. Some people are dancing without even lifting their feet off the ground. That's the super cool thing right.now—the less you move, the cooler you are. Basically the only rule is to keep the beat."

So you can leave those fancy routines for your talented friends. In the disco you can get by just moving creatively. In fact, many people make up in weird movements what they lack in rhythm. Just don't get so far gone you start mistaking acrobatics for dancing.

What it really comes down to is trusting your own instincts (which is a good deal trickier than being your own best friend). If you're too shy even for that (and never did learn to ride a bicycle either) you may find yourself contemplating actual dancing lessons. After all, you may reason, even John Travolta had to be



taught. (At last count there were some eleven hundred different people claiming to have been the one who taught him, each selling their own autographed book of steps.) So off you'll run to dance classes in a panic. Bad idea! Far better to approach your good friends. (If none of your good friends can dance, you should all go to the disco together. If everyone does the same step, odds are you can create a major new dance craze right on the spot.) If your good friends won't teach you, any passing acquaintance will do. Failing that, you can try teaching yourself. Of course, if you teach yourself, you can never be too sure of what you've learned. Once again you'll have to rely on your own instincts. But since learning to rely on your own instincts is easily as important as learning to dance, the sooner you get to it the better.

# FOUR BASIC DISCO DANCE RULES:

- Be prepared to sweat. It's only through hard work and repetition that your body will eventually come to accept its new function.
- 2) Don't take it so seriously. If you think it'll be the end of the world if you don't learn how to dance, the pressure will kill you. It won't be the end of the world. It will only seem that way.
- 3) Don't take it too lightly, either. If all you want to do is clown around, you'll be undermining your purpose. You want to get out there and take part in the major entertainment form of the eighties. So wipe the grin off your face and concentrate. You can learn to dance.
- 4) Let the music take you. Forget about how foolish you may look and just move.

Ever so gradually the music will reach down inside you. Your body will open up. Disco fever will attack you. You will begin to feel limber, spry, even giddy. The simplest tasks, like venturing down to the 7-11 for a carton of milk, will set you dancing. You may not be able to refrain from bobbing your head and moving your hips to the music you suddenly hear all around you. The old image you had of yourself as someone who was never meant to dance will slide away. You will have to build a new image, a cooler, more streamlined image to replace it. No longer will you be able to blame all your problems in life on the fact that you never learned to dance.

During this exhilarating period of time, you must guard against becoming obnoxious. Your old friends may start avoiding you—especially if they can't dance—claiming you've sold out. It is important to retain that tolerance you had for the underdog, back in the days when you were a spectator in the dance of life. The only thing separating you from those underdogs is the courageous decision you made to take the first step.



Disco does strange things to previously shy and quiet people. When asked to a disco, a shy, unworldly type may suddenly appear clad in clinging leather, neon sunglasses, and teetering over sixteen-foot high heels. And why not? Fashion at the disco has less to do with dressing right than image-making. You must be as creative in what you wear as in how you dance. Remember, you're living out your fantasies, so dress the part.

For instance, here's *The Disco Handbook*'s Disco Advisor, Raymond DiGiacomo of Brooklyn, describing one of his recent disco dates: "She had on a long black skirt, with black lace over it with sequins, and a red Oriental robe. It was this red silk brocade robe her grandfather used to have, and she moved the buttons, took off the belt—it looks like something you'd see in Chinatown. When I got home I discovered my father's robe from when he first got married. It's a striped robe, but if you turn it inside out, it looks just like hers. I was thinking, on Valentine's Day, if we go out, we can both wear our red robes. That would be sensational."

More than the clothes, it's the idea behind what you're wearing that really makes it work. The idea of having an idea. The concept. The look. Scanning the pages of fashion magazines might do for a start, but it isn't wise to depend on any "official" point of view. If

you start occupying yourself with what look is in fashion, there's no end to the trouble you'll bring upon yourself. No sooner does one look become trendy than another, hipper look replaces it, and if you want to show up at the disco in the old look, you've got to add a few personal touches to it, so that no one will think you're so outdated you're still wearing the old look. They'll know you're really super hip enough to be doing a *number* on that look. (If you can figure all that out in one swallow, you have a better chance than most of succeeding at the fashion game.)

Having given you fair warning, The Disco Handbook presents a few of the current looks which show signs of durability:

# THE ELEGANT LOOK

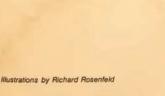
Going to the disco isn't just like going to the movies. Slit skirts, strapless gowns, zippered jumpsuits really make a statement.

Remember, at the disco you are communicating something. The disco is for fantasy. Perhaps you need some silk or lace daydreams in your life.

A few more fashion tips:

Hats are always good. Golf caps are great, baseball caps chancy, football helmets a risk.

Try a bow tie and suspenders—but neither without the other. On girls, this is called the Annie Hall look.







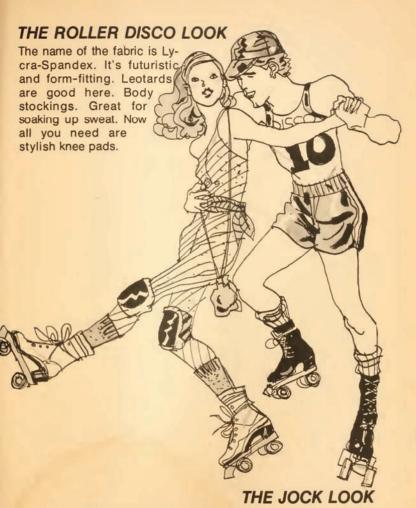


# THE LEATHER LOOK

An old standby that can't go wrong. Leather jeans, leather vest,

leather jackets, boots.





The feature here is satin boxing shorts. Tank top T-shirt. Sweat-socks. Go dancing, then go jogging.



# (The Basics of Being at Home in a Noisy Place)

Strictly in disco terms, kinetic energy can be defined as an uninhibited combination of zest, warmth, and arresting colors. Unless you go to a disco you won't know if you've got it or not. So the first rule of Disco Decorum is to put yourself in a disco and

give your energy a chance to shine.

Many people, as disco fever spreads, have developed a fear about attending that place where their fantasies can be acted out. They're afraid to be let down when the disco turns out to be just another strobe-lit rock and roll dancehall. Along with that fear is the crazy notion that going to a disco could actually change their lives. No one thing will ever change your life (unless that acceptance to the University of Hawaii comes through). And no one thing will ever destroy it (unless that math quiz next week is really bad). If you aren't too self-conscious you can just take the disco

for what it is and enjoy it. And what it is, is a haven for self-conscious people of all persuasions, for the world's inhibited and the super-uptight. Once you're at the disco, you'll at least be inside instead of wanting to be inside or fantasizing about how great it must be inside.

Remember kinetic energy? The thing about kinetic energy is that no one else really knows what it is. One person's kinetic energy can be another person's nasal drip. So if you're at the disco trying to meet someone, rejection can be much easier to take. It's just a case of kinetic energies failing to mesh. Hours can go by and you won't feel bad. Eventually you may emanate in the direction of someone whose aura attracts vou. and your vibes will intersect. Wordlessly



you will find yourself with a dancing partner. You may then want to dance your partner right in the faces of those other turkeys who rejected you. This is called the revenge factor. People who've never been rejected in their lives don't know what revenge is and what a fabulous feeling they're missing.

Depending on the kind of disco it is, it's perfectly acceptable to dance with someone for a couple of hours and then say so long, see you here next week. Nothing more is expected. It's just this

kind of hassle-free environment that makes the disco so appealing. You can come to dance, to share your kinetic energy with a friend, and it doesn't have to get serious. You may spot that person again in future weeks, and dance again for several hours, and it still doesn't mean anything. (After six years of regular weekly dancing it starts to mean something.) Lots of people come in packs, sororities, and football teams and dance among themselves, or dance with others but go home together in one van. Lots of people dance by themselves, with their reflections in the mirror. (If you wind up getting rejected by your own mirror image, maybe you'd be better off taking up another hobby, like panning for gold in Peru.) At many discos Friday night is for singles, and Saturday is for couples, so do some investigating beforehand.

### DANCING QUOTIENT

If you're bringing someone to a disco make sure your dancing quotients are roughly in the same ballpark. In other words, if you're just getting revved up by midnight and your partner is getting blue in the face squelching yawns, that's a negative match. If you're the amateur observer-type who prefers to grab a table at eight-fifteen and hug it for dear life the rest of the night, don't pick a partner who expects to do some heavy dancing. You may find one or both of you leaving early, alone. Likewise, it's a good idea to coordinate your outfits, at least to a certain extent. You don't want him to show up at your house in track shorts only to find you in a floor-length prom gown. One of you is going to be awfully embarrassed, and the relationship may be doomed. However, by accident, you both turn up in suede and leather—in compatible colors—you know you've got a future.

You should also be in agreement on what type of disco you want to visit. Maybe you want to crash a posh celebrity disco you heard about, but your partner is more the conservative, neighborhood type. This is bound to be frustrating for you, or nerve-wracking for your partner, depending on which person prevails. In the opinion of our resident Disco Deejay, Scott Nelson (also the assistant manager of a disco), celebrity discos like Studio 54 and Xenon aren't really discos at all.



**Wide World Photos** 

"The people there make you feel unwanted. At a lot of places it's done at the door. The people who go there are usually rich, famous, foreign, or in some way chic. Whether they're real or not is beside the point. They come to flaunt their attitudes. To me





Vide World Photos

that's not what a disco is supposed to be for. You couldn't go in there and meet people, dance, make friends. So when somebody says I've been to Xenon, I've been to Studio 54, I say, gee, that's a shame. A lot of young people who are just getting into disco say, we stood in line for Studio 54 and we got in. I say that's really a shame that somebody has to lower themselves to get into that kind of clique. It's not worth it. Who wants to go to a place where you get shunned at the door, go inside, and then get shunned by the people? That's no fun."

On the other hand, our Disco Advisor, Raymond, says, "I love to go, even though it's intimidating. Some people won't go. They feel it's not worth the trouble. They want to go to a place where it's comfortable, where they'll meet friends. But to me there's so much more electricity."

You pay your money and you take your choice. Wherever you go, don't expect to get into any great conversations. About the most you can hope for is an occasional: "More apple cider, Ricky?" or "Havin' a good time, Ethel?" or "I don't believe this deejay, do you, Fred?" or "The day they made Barry Manilow, they threw away the mold, don't you agree, Lucy?"

As many people come to the disco to watch as to dance, but few, if any, come to get cuddly. This is not a drive-in. There'll be plenty of time for hanky-panky when you reach the mandatory disco retirement age of thirty-eight. And, keep in mind, if you're very outrageous in your dress or decorum, you might discover yourself being watched.

Bringing your own disco date will free you from much of the tension involved with going to the disco alone. It does, however, set up the equally tension-producing situation of getting a date in the first place. Despite all the recent improvements in the cuality of modern life—deodorant spray for the feet, little crystals that burst into mouthwash, touch-tone dialing—dating is still stuck in tradition, and still largely left up to the male to do the asking, the female to do the accepting or rejecting. But traditions die, so don't feel shy about asking a guy to dance. He may make a fuss, say he can't dance, or simply run away. Be persistent. Offer to teach him to dance. Buy a good pair of track shoes.

If you've got a steady disco date, you may want to work up your own disco dance routine. Although there is nothing like the silent, sweaty camaraderie a well-oiled dance team can create—in its



Bob Noble/Globe Photos



3ob Noble/Globe Photos

own way as intense a relationship as pitcher and catcher or quarterback and split end or Mutt and Jeff—these days, that sort of thing is frowned on in some establishments as being too competitive. It smacks too much of showing off. So unless you're willing to offend your friends, or planning to turn pro, a highly polished routine may not be your best bet.



And it could be that after a while you will experience a tremendous urge to run screaming from the disco to gulp the clean fresh air of the outside world. This is perfectly all right. At least you can say you've been to the disco and could certainly go again if you wanted to, only you don't want to. The disco isn't for everyone. Of course you'll then have to deal with your friends who will say you never really gave it a chance. But you know you did. You stood all you absolutely could. More than that no friend or disco should ever ask of you.



# (Types You're Likely to Meet)

Whether you're wating on line to get into the choicest of the ultra-posh hangouts in your city, or happy just to visit your friendly, neighborhood converted warehouse, the disco beginner should be aware of the variety of characters to be encountered inside.

Although you may be unable to spot them in the swirling darkness before they make their moves, simply by recalling these pages you will be able to get rid of an unwanted Disco Demon within minutes. On the other hand, knowing what you will know, you may decide to ride it out with a particular character. But that's what the disco is all about anyway—taking a chance.

### **FARRAH FOXY**

She's so intimidating you'd think she was famous. That's because, in the world she circulates in, she almost is. She has a knack for making you feel like a dowdy sap.

Farrah Foxy is likely to show up at the disco in a body stocking and then try to rip out the eyes of anyone she thinks is staring. Some people are foolish enough to tag along with Farrah because they think she'll attract men like fleas. They're right. Only she'll get all the men and you'll be left with the fleas. Then she'll call you a few weeks later to tell you what drips they all were.

Constantly investigating the fashion pages for the newest look, and always searching for the perfect wave, set, and hair color, Farrah will undoubtedly show up three-quarters of an hour to a day and a half late for your disco date. If you'd rather not spend the evening waiting for someone who doesn't even like to dance, forget Farrah.

#### MIKE MACHO

Whether twice-divorced or barely out of junior high school, this type is perhaps the easiest to recognize. His after-shave precedes him by a solid minute (or 48.2 feet). Sporting a hairdo preferred by two out of every three local TV news anchormen, open psychedelic shirt, and a blinding assortment of baubles, bangles, and old Boy Scout medals that jingle-jangle when he walks (he's more likely to saunter or strut), Mike comes on brash and arrogant. It's obvious he hasn't come to the disco to dance, but merely to show off. He's so out of it he thinks the disco is just another pick-up joint. Underneath the blaring din, this joker may actually try whispering in your ear. Even though you won't be able to hear him, you just know it's the same old line.





## **SANDY SUPERSPORTS**

This model comes in male and female, knee brace, thigh guard, and jogging sneakers. They will also be accompanied by the definite scent of the locker room. From a distance Sandy can be noticed by his or her uninhibited moves out on the dance floor. These moves will most often resemble the kind that brought them fame on their chosen athletic field. That large-necked hulking creature over there, for instance, swiveling his hips, right arm extended, right hand squashing the faces of all those who would dare get in his way, was once a second-string fullback. Only by a careful study of his moves would you be able to figure this out and thus avoid the possibility of a concussion—other than the fact that he's also wearing a football helmet.

If you're in extra good physical condition, Sandy may be just

the jock for you.

# **POLLY PRIM**

She's only visiting the disco on a dare. She'd rather be home knitting American flags. She's the type who has to get to know you first before she'll dance with you. Once dancing, though, things won't improve too much. After five minutes she'll be pooped. She would feel more comfortable on the sidelines, trying to understand the strange creatures writhing by in sequined undershorts.

It's really not Polly's fault that she's this way. Blame it on her upbringing. One day maybe, if you devote enough time, you might succeed in getting her to shout "Oh, yeah!" during a particularly thrilling bit of disco business. But that could take years, and what are you going to do in the meantime—bite your nails?

# RALPH ROCKER

The only reason old Ralph is at the disco is to make wisecracks about the scene, the music, and the people. And although you may hear him shout "Let's Boogie!" once or twice during the night, it's only his way of showing his preference for rock and roll

over "this new-fangled disco junk." With a ten-day growth of beard and a six-month growth of fingernails, Ralph can be easily spotted sneering at the guys dancing by him in their elegant three-piece suits. Ralph himself is clad in smelly undershirt and dirty jeans. Beneath his slobby exterior, Ralph is really terrified that disco will someday replace rock and roll, and he'll have to shower, shave, and become the regular person he was back in 1968, when he dropped out of kindergarten to drive a truck.

#### **ED EXTROVERT**

If you happen to have a date with Ed, be prepared to suffer. He's here to have one heck of a high old time no matter how much of a



fool of himself he has to make—and usually he has to make a complete fool of himself. So try not to be too embarrassed as you watch him do the splits, headstands, handstands, all the latest steps. It wouldn't be so bad if only Ed knew how to dance! But the man has absolutely no sense of rhythm. Even before Ed sets foot on the dance floor, you can spot him, usually by his leisure suit and white socks, or else by the clever slogan T-shirt he's wearing. If you think flakey is cute, you may wind up with a lifelong friend in Ed, who will call you at least once a day and keep you on the phone for hours at a time.



#### SUZY SLEEPWALKER

When you talked to her before your first date, Suzy was really up for the disco. Unfortunately, it isn't even ten and Suzy just can't stay awake. The girl doesn't have the stamina. The nightlife isn't her bag. To recognize Suzy, simply look for a girl slumped over, head resting on her arms. The quieter Suzys can be spotted drooped over the shoulders of their bedraggled partners, who just want to get in another good hour of dancing before dropping Suzy off in a heap on her doorstep. Have pity on the poor girl. She never gets to watch Johnny Carson or Saturday Night Live. On the other hand, she's the first one to the breakfast table in the morning, where she never ceases to irritate the members of her family with her cheerfulness.

## SID SOPHISTICATED

He's the fashion equivalent of the city bus system—a couple of years behind schedule. Look for Sid to be the last one at the disco in the John Travolta look. He's still dancing the hustle, mainly because it took him three years to perfect his moves and he's not about to give it up. He's not entirely comfortable when dancing. He'd actually prefer going bowling or to the racetrack with his buddies. But all his buddies are either in the army, in jail, or at the disco (those seven other guys in white three-piece suits), so he's got no choice. His heroes are the great Mr. Travolta, Joe Namath, and anyone on a disco dance show who looks cool.

Sid's not really a bad guy. He's not particularly out to meet girls. In fact, he doesn't know what he's out to do. Basically he'd like to find a girl to tell him.

# **AL ARISTOCRAT**

The first thing you notice about Al Aristocrat is his accent—not quite Italian, not quite French. He didn't have that accent this afternoon in gym. The next thing you notice about Al is his clothes. People are always running up to ask him where he gets his fabu-



lous suits, hats, scarves, fantastic \$600 hand-tooled disco cowboy boots. In that suave accent he'll toss off a casual "Hong Kong," or "London." He likes to brag that his biggest problem in life is trying to find a winter vacation spot where he won't run into Mick Jagger again.

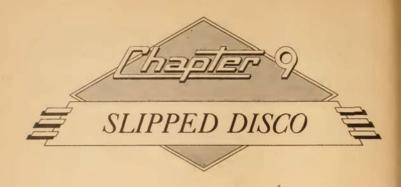
Some people feel that deep down he's really Al Average, and all that money only prevents him from truly enjoying himself. The truth is, Al doesn't have *any* money. He's spent it all in making himself beautiful. His hope is that someday a famous person will discover him and take him away from all this. Instead, he'll usually wind up hanging around with Farrah Foxy, a person he truly deserves.



## **OLGA OGLER**

Olga is one of the few people who can spend an entire evening at the disco without dancing one dance! That's not what turns her on. She's come to watch all the crazy people do their stuff. Each person represents a new fantasy for her to focus on, while her own life is slipping by with the music. If you're unlucky enough to have brought Olga as your disco date, expect her to fix her gaze permanently at a spot some ten feet beyond your left shoulder—even while you're trying some non-verbal communication on her. She's only interested in what her imagination provides her. Inthe-flesh reality leaves her cold.





efore we go any further, if you're looking to disco to improve your health and well-being, lighten your disposition, and bring new zest to your social life—forget it. The amazing claims you might have heard about the healing powers of disco dancing are actually nothing more than the fevered ravings of newly-deluded converts. None of these claims has yet to survive the scrutiny of long-term scientific analysis—and you won't either, unless you're careful. Granted, author Stewart Kranz, who wrote Science and Technology and the Arts, says about the subject:

"From a psychological point of view, a disco is designed to create a tremendously high level of emotional response. Everything in the environment is designed to heighten the emotions. It's a very powerful psychological inducement to fantasy, to getting rid of your aggressions. It's probably a very good thing."

So much for science.

While there may be certain benefits to the circulatory system to be derived from disco dancing over an extended period of time, in order to achieve anything near a sufficient level of fitness for the benefits to mean anything, you must approach the activity with the intestinal fortitude and discipline of an Olympian, willing to devote whatever time, energy, and determination is necessary to achieve mastery over such a grueling endeavor. Whew!

Otherwise, as far as stopping your diet, forget it! It's back to cottage cheese and no cookies.

Therefore, to repeat, if you're older than eight, proceed into the disco with caution. And not without first considering these questions:

THE DISCO FITNESS QUIZ			
YES	NO	MAYBE	
			How's your spine? Does it bend?
			Is there a history of heart disease in your family?
			Are you prepared to disco regularly, four nights a week, six hours a night?
			Is at least four hours of sleep a night basic to your sanity?
			Does roller skating make you nauseous?
			Would spending the next six months in a plaster cast put any sort of crimp in you lifestyle?
			Are you insured?



If you can answer yes to at least six, but no to less than four, of the above questions; perhaps the disco nightlife is not for you. You'd be better off pursuing a less strenuous hobby, like driving in demolition derbies. If, on the other hand, you didn't answer any of the questions, didn't even read them, think questions and answers are for creeps, then the disco wants you.

The first thing you must master is the art of falling asleep as soon as you come home from school, so that you can be awake at midnight, gyrating until dawn with all the Beautiful People. (The reason they're all so beautiful and you're not is that they don't have to be up in the morning and you do.) Accomplished discogoers can grab ten-minute catnaps almost anywhere: in stalled elevators, in the corridor on the way to class, and between a) and b) on multiple choice questions. If, after a month of such a schedule, you can still be chipper around the family breakfast table, you have a great future ahead of you on the disco circuit. If you also remember your name and date of birth, you should think seriously of willing your body to science.

So much for science. Just as ex-athletes struck down in their prime can be seen hobbling city streets at midday, paydirt in their eyes, vacantly scanning the horizon for a hoop, a goalpost, home plate, so disco victims, bandaged at the ankle and wrist, their knees twisted out of joint, their backs wracked, wander the avenues in a perpetual four A.M. of the soul, unable to move yet unable to close their eyes, the disco beat still resounding in their thoroughly battered brains. Pathetic figures, they are, caught in a musical jet-lag. Unless you want to join their aching number, you must, quite early, visualize the disco as a marathon. Nine years old is not too young to start doing stretching exercises. By thirteen you should be taking laps around the local reservoir, if you can find it.

#### **DISCO ADVICE**

Pacing yourself is important. And so is knowing when to quit. Get in touch with your body's warning signs:

If you faint more than twice during the same record, it might be time to take a five-minute break.

If those spots flashing in front of your eyes are not an integral part of the light show, maybe you should apply a hot towel to your forehead.

If you can't skate, going to a roller disco is not just foolish, it could be suicidal.

Watch your diet. It isn't a good idea to eat too heavily before a night of disco dancing. You don't need to be hauling any excess baggage around all night.

Otherwise, if you don't go deaf, disco dancing can be as safe and healthful as a football scrimmage with a team of gorillas, or dodging trucks on the Interstate.



You say your biggest kick at parties is hanging out by the turntable spinning records and watching all the other kids dance in front of you? You say you sometimes go so far as to lip-synch right along with the song, pretending you're the entertainment for the night, with the polished, glitzy moves of a superstar? You say you dig the power you have when you're selecting what everyone will dance to next, the way you can control the room, unseen, but felt by all? You say you like to notice people's expressions when the next song you pick comes on, that sometimes you feel you know just what they want to hear, even better than they do. You say you're always devising programs of your own on your tape recorder? Is that what you say? Well, The Disco Handbook says you might be DISCO DEEJAY material. Read on.

A disco deejay should not be confused with a regular radio station deejay. The only real similarity between the two is that they both spin records. But whereas the disco deejay's sole concern is music, the regular radio station deejay has to go to school for a year and a half to learn how to talk like Wolfman Jack, so he can convincingly give the time and the weather, read commercials, tell bad jokes, and break for news on the half hour.



At the disco, spinning records has been elevated to an art form. The deejay is the person responsible for creating the sound track to a different disco scene every night. Take it from our resident Disco Heavy, Ray Caviano, President of RFC Records: "A lot of people take that deejay for granted up in the booth. But he's literally weaving an evening, a feeling. He has to play for his audience and project a dramatic feeling for the evening. People take their partying very seriously, so you can't mess with their heads."

So the deejay, above all, really has to know the music. More than titles and artists and what year it got to number 68 on the charts, you've got to be in the sound, the structure, the texture, the beat. For the most important thing the deejay has to get down is the technique of the successful segue. That's the ability to move from one record to the next without slowing the action, missing a beat, or destroying the feel of the room. It's not as easy as it sounds. In fact it's impossible if you only have one turntable. Which is why all disco deejays use at least two, sometimes three.

The Disco Handbook's resident deejay is Scott Nelson, 21, who hails from Fullerton, California and who has been spinning discs in New York City for the last year and a half, at a place called Ones, usually during the weekend teen hours.

Scott had always been into electronics as a hobby. "I had experience as a technician before I became a disco deejay," he says. He started out in theater, working behind the scenes on lighting and sound. "I knew the equipment from making mixes for theatrical productions. I made tapes using records for background sound effects. When I got turned on to disco I learned the music real fast. When you like something it comes very easy to you."

#### **GETTING STARTED**

"The most important thing is to know the music," Scott advises. "Listen to it, find out how it works. You have to know the structure of each song, its component parts and where the mixable sections are." A deejay must master the segue, that is the technique of getting two records "to beat as one." The best way to do that is by watching a professional deejay at work. "There will be several sections on a record," says Scott, "maybe in the beginning, or near the end, maybe it's a drumroll, which will match the same drumroll of another record." You have to practice your technique until you can segue from one record to another flawlessly and effectively. "Now, for instance, halfway through a song I can take one record, bring it in, let it play, and then cut it out and bring back the rest of the song that I started with."

(If you're wondering how this can possibly be accomplished on a single turntable, you're pretty sharp. Obviously when programming for the disco, the deejay uses two turntables and a device known as a mixer to enable him to make the necessary segues which will allow the music to continue on an even flow without pause. He also uses an equalizer, which can bring up certain elements of a record, the bass say, or the treble, without changing the others.)

"Finally you get a bunch of records together that you know

really well and make a tape. Then you take that tape around and try to convince someone you're good enough to spin for eight hours." That someone may be a club owner, or a friend about to throw a party. "You should expose yourself to all kinds of people and situations when you're starting out. Word of mouth is the best kind of advertising you can get." So you have to be around enough so that people begin to hear about you from their friends. After that, you're on your way.

#### AT WORK

"A good deejay knows what kind of music and what kind of lights will make an audience get up and dance, no matter how tired they are. You'll know everything about the sound system. You know the music like the back of your hand. If you're comfortable with your stack of records you can concentrate on the record playing and the one next to it—you don't have to plan four or five records ahead. I'll get close to the end of the record before I play the next. I'll know where it is, what I can do with the lights . . . after awhile it's instinctive.



Wide World Pho

"You have to blend records very carefully, all with the same kind of beat. The tempo slowly increases to a crescendo, a high excited mood. Then, all of a sudden, you might drop it, or else crescendo even higher. You may go to a certain point and hold it through ten or twenty albums, then very carefully make your transition to another type of beat, and bring that to a crescendo. If you pick a bad song you know it before you even play it. Everybody stands on the floor and just looks at you. You've got some highly critical people at the disco. All you've got to do is make one mistake and you lose their attention; they'll walk off the floor. It could be something so subtle that people who don't go to discos every week won't even hear it.

"So a good deejay will go from a funky music, which will be free-style, and curve it up faster and faster into more of a hustle, and then may peak it at a hustle, and cut it off into a slow song. Deejays work in different patterns. Most music today is so intricate that it can either be freaked to or hustled to—the beat goes both ways."

## **RECORD POOLS**

Disco music is by now a booming business, really boosted by the opinions and expertise of the disco deejay. Deejays get records before the general public, either from record companies directly, or from pools. These pools, operating in many major cities, are serviced by record companies who wish to test-market their wares. Deejays fill out feedback reports on the new records, indicating to the record companies whether or not they've got a potential hit on their hands. "If you're a professional deejay you're entitled to get records," says Scott, "because a lot of people are going to hear your music. Most deejays have to fill out audience response forms. The producers of the records want to know what the audience's response is before they spend the money on ten or twenty thousand copies of the record. So they'll put out maybe 1,000 copies, send them to deelays, and come back with 1,000 different responses. If the deejays like it, the public likes it, then they'll go with it. If not, maybe it can be revised, or remixed."

#### **WORKING CONDITIONS**

The pay scale is wide open for the disco deejay, anywhere from \$35 to \$150 a night and up, depending on your reputation, ability, competition, and salesmanship. For that kind of money you're expected not only to program the music flawlessly, but to make sure everyone has a good time. You've got to put on a show.

"You're on your feet, spinning, from nine at night to four or five in the morning," says Scott, "but most of the time you're too excited to think about it. I get very excited when I'm spinning. Not only is there that slight amount of tension, because you're a little bit nervous, but you really are performing. You want to look good, to be good. Once the music starts, you get into it, you start feeling good, the music sounds great, the people are going to town—the excitement is a natural high.

"At nine o'clock, when you don't have a lot of people in the room, you play Top 40 to get them to dance. Those are the songs they know, the ones they hear on the radio. That's what'll get them dancing in the beginning. As more people come in, the music gets faster and higher and more exciting. When the place is packed you can do almost anything you want. That's the best time to play something new. You can blend it in and the people will still be excited because the music, even though they've never heard it before, will be following the pattern you've already set up.

"Disco is an emotional music. It runs on a natural beat that you feel in your body. You feel that bass rumble. Your whole body shakes. It makes you want to dance."

## THE VOLUME

"The best thing to do is to go to different discos and stay an hour or two. If you walk out and your ears are ringing, or you have an earache or headache, don't go back. The sound waves in a lot of discos can make you go deaf. A lot of deejays go deaf because the soundwaves are too much. They've got their earphones blaring because they've got to be able to hear in one ear what the earphones are playing and in the other ear what's going down on the dance floor. That's why most deejays have got their heads

tilted to the left when you see them, and they've got an earphone stuck between their shoulder and their ear. Outside it's loud, so they've got to turn their earphones up louder, and that's how they go deaf.

"I've got a soundproof booth here, so I don't have to blare my earphones as loud as the music outside. It's less of a strain.

"In my opinion, if you can talk, or go out on the dance floor and talk in a relatively normal tone of voice so you're not screaming, that's a good sound system. Good sound doesn't hurt your ears, you can hear all the instruments, and it feels good. People like to be able to talk to each other because this is a social event. You don't want to get your brains beaten out by the music. You come to have a good time. If you can't talk to anybody, what's the use?"

#### **ROCK AND ROLL**

"In the '50s they had dances similar to the hustle. Rock and roll followed a pattern and you could dance the same dance over and over again to many songs. Rock these days has so many different beats within one song. Some songs don't really have a beat. It's just instruments playing, but not in any pattern. At the disco, even for people who can't dance any of the disco dances, that beat is there. Plus, there's the clarity of the music, and the volume is like a magnet that makes you want to move to it."

#### **BEATS PER MINUTE**

All music has a BPM (beats per minute). The higher the BPM, the faster the song. Anything over 100 BPM is considered danceable. The highest BPM is somewhere up in the 130's now. To figure out the BPM of a particular song, just count out the beats, as if you were taking a pulse. Do this for fifteen seconds, then multiply the number you get by four to arrive at your total. Another disco deejay friend of ours is Stash, of Disco Van 2000, who advises: "When you segue from song to song, you should always go up. If your record is 124 BPM, you can put on another 124, but you'd never go down to a 116, or the room will lose the feeling. The feeling should go up and up."



D isco is literally everywhere. You can't walk down a street, flick on a radio or a TV, without hearing it. If, however, you're still feeling somehow disconnected, here's a list of some further disco resources, offered to *The Disco Handbook* by our good friends down at the *Disco News*.

#### **DISCO TV**

Consult your local papers for day and time.

Dance Fever—Hollywood, California

What's New—St. Paul, Minnesota

Soap Factory—New York, New York

Disco Magic—Miami, Florida

Hot City Disco—Los Angeles, California

Soul Alive—New York, New York

The Scene—Detroit, Michigan

Weekday Fever—Cleveland, Ohio

Disco 23—Albuquerque, New Mexico

Studio 78—Washington, D.C.

American Bandstand—Los Angeles, California

Soul Train—Los Angeles, California

Invitation to Dance—New York, New York

Feel Like Dancin'—Montreal, Quebec, Canada

#### **DISCO RADIO**

The following is a partial list of radio stations gone over, in whole or in part, to a disco format.

WKTU-New York, New York

WBLS-New York, New York

WWRL-New York, New York

WKTK-Baltimore, Maryland

WQXI-Atlanta, Georgia

WSEA-Georgetown, Delaware

WILD-Boston, Massachusetts

WJPA—Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

WFFM-Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

WBUS-Boston, Massachusetts

WKMS-Murray, Kentucky

WISM-Madison, Wisconsin

WWAP-Indianapolis, Indiana

WHBC-Canton, Ohio

WGCI-Chicago, Illinois

WRMZ-Columbus, Ohio

WDLB-Marshfield, Wisconsin

WWWS-Saginaw, Michigan

WKWM-Grand Rapids, Michigan

WTKX-Pensacola, Florida

WCKO-Fort Lauderdale, Florida

KCBS-San Francisco, California

KSFX-San Francisco, California

KIIS-Los Angeles, California

KXYZ-Houston, Texas

KSET-El Paso, Texas

KFMX-Minneapolis, Minnesota

KDIA-Oakland, California

KIOE-Honolulu, Hawaii

KVOV-Henderson, Nevada

KSOL-San Mateo, California

#### **TEEN DISCO**

You don't have to look far to find a teen disco. There's probably one in your neighborhood, if not right now, then tomorrow by sundown. Many regular discos open their doors to teenagers during hours when they would otherwise be closed, usually on the weekends, from 2-6. Some teen discos allow you to remain later. It's the same music, the same lights, the same mix. The only thing missing is the alcohol.

The following discos are opened to teens (and younger) on weekend afternoons:

Ones
New York, New York
Boston, Boston (Illusions)
Oskos
Dingbats
Guys & Dolls
Feets
Emerald City
Fourth Street Annex



New York City New York City Boston, Massachusetts Los Angeles, California Chicago, Illinois Franklin Square, N.Y. Plymouth Meeting, Pa. Cherry Hill, N.J. Santa Rosa, California

#### **ROLLER DISCO**

Thousands of roller-skating rinks have traded in their seasick Lowry organs for sophisticated disco systems. Many others have designated disco days, nights, weekends, or months. Roller disco is rapidly developing into a cult in itself, with its own cast of characters, fashions, and etiquette. A lot of roller disco freaks are turning away from disco, in fact, claiming it's passé. Go figure it—just when you finally learned how to dance!



## **DISCO FUTURE**

Although disco is the wave of the future, the main entertainment medium of the eighties (roller disco advocates to the contrary), disco also has a future. To find out what the disco will be like ten years from now, The Disco Handbook went to our Disco Visionary, science-writer Stewart Kranz. He's been working closely with rock star Peter Gabriel, and they've both given the matter a lot of thought.

"In the disco of the 1990's you would have the possibility of altering the appearance of your environment almost ad infinitum, depending on your mood," says Kranz. He envisions a room where you'd be videotaped before entering the disco itself. Once there, you'd find your videotaped image up on the huge video wall. "You could come out of that room and dance with yourself!" he relates.

The video wall could be programmed to recreate all sorts of environments, from the frigid wastes of Alaska, to the steamy jungles of Africa. And your image could be projected right into the midst of it. "You'd definitely believe you were right where you fantasized you wanted to be," Kranz predicts.

"The technology is awesome and really frightening on some levels," he says. "The level I'm talking about right now is just good clean fun. But you could also have a completely mindaltering environment, one that would really blow your fuses."



aybe you'd rather not go to a disco. Maybe you'd rather the disco came to you. Maybe you'd like to stage a disco night at school. Or maybe you're the handy sort who'd like to put together a mini-disco of your own in your basement, garage, or playroom if your parents will give permission. How about a disco Sweet Sixteen, or a disco junior prom? For the casual convert and dedicated fanatic alike, disco has come so far in so short a time that all these options are now open. You could even be the first one on your block to discofy your entire house! (For this it would help if your parents no longer live at home.)

Thanks to the folks at Disco Van 2000, the premier mobile disco organization, *The Disco Handbook* has come up with this section

for the do-it-yourself disco buff.

# **EQUIPMENT**

## Two turntables:

Unless you're planning a more permanent operation, you can probably borrow the second turntable from a friend.

#### Mixer:

This piece of equipment enables you to segue from one record to the next, and that is absolutely essential to the disco experience. There are mixers out on the market now, primarily designed for home use, which sell for around \$100. Two separate stereo systems operated by two people with coordination is a cheap way that works too.

# Speakers:

If your friend is bringing over his turntable, better tell him to lug along his speakers. Then you can have the optimal four-corner effect. If you have to make do with two speakers, place them on either side of the room, facing each other. One speaker on each side of your turntable, facing outward, is not recommended.

# DISCO DECORATIONS AND LIGHTING FOR HOME

The pounding sounds of disco songs, flashing lights, reflecting streaks of silver, and sudden bursts of color create the disco atmosphere that keeps the stars out late at night. You can create that same magical disco feeling when you decorate, using these ideas from *Dynamite*.

Long shimmering sheets of aluminum foil are the basics of your decorating scheme. You'll need a couple of rolls of aluminum foil, strips of stiff cardboard cut to the width of the foil, and string. Measure out four or more floor to ceiling lengths of foil. Make two cardboard strips for each foil sheet. Fold the tops and bottoms of the foil sheets over the stiff cardboard strips and add tape or glue to secure them. Punch a hole at each end of the cardboard strip that is in the top of the foil sheet. Tie a 10-inch piece of string through each hole, bring the strings together, tie them, and tape or tack them to the ceiling.

Strings of Christmas lights strung from corner to corner across the ceiling or anywhere around the room will reflect off the foil sheets and add just the right light touch of color. For a ceiling centerpiece, use big balloons glazed with glitter and wreathed in ribbons and bows. Small tables for two, four, or more set up around the room will create a nightclub feeling. Cover the tables with paper tablecloths; drape them with tinsel and streamers. Glittery Christmas tree ornaments, like shiny silver balls, add an extra glow.

## LIGHTING FOR A SCHOOL DISCO PARTY

Lighting is what transforms a regular room into a disco. Here's Disco Van 2000's David DiSernia to provide further illumination: "Whether you hire someone or do it yourself, it's a necessity to have some sort of lighting, so that you can take whatever room this is you're working in, whether it's a gym, cafeteria, hotel ballroom, church, and create a new mood in it, a disco ambiance. The room should be somewhat darkened. It's very difficult to get people up to dance in a regularly lit room.

"It's not the amount of lighting you have, but how you use it. You really should have someone who knows how to operate the lighting; if not you'll walk out with a headache. If you're not going to control the lights yourself, then a mirrored ball with two spotlights on it, spinning all night, is sufficient. Otherwise, there are lots of special effects: flood lights, scoop lights, strobes, fog and

snow machines, bubbles, wind. . . . "

A few minutes getting some help from a theater teacher on

stage lighting could be helpful.

For some people the home disco setup is the next logical step in completing the ultimate stereo system—disco lighting and fixtures being the visual equivalent to match the audio. Now places like Mechanical Mirror Works, in New York City, are manufacturing these disco products, which you can add on like components.

## The Mirrored Ball:

Comes in 8, 10, and 12 inch sizes. A unit with a battery-operated motor is easy to put up and easy to take down after a party. Beware of Mirrored Ball kits, which have to be assembled, and Mir-

rored Balls with electric motors, which must be grounded before you can use them.

## Pin Spots:

Spotlights which shoot a direct beam that bursts when it hits the prisms on the Mirrored Ball.

# **Infinity Mirror:**

A mirror which pulsates to the rhythm of the music, with a starburst effect in the middle.

# Programmable Random Flashes:

Multicolored lights in a wall hanging that change patterns at random, with colors that flash on and off.

## Xenon Strobe:

A high intensity light, which gives you that speeded-up "silent movie" effect.

Disco Prices from Mechanical Mirror Works, 41 Madison Ave., New York, New York: The Mirrored Ball—\$40, \$60, & \$80 depending on size. Pin Spots—\$25.00. Infinity Mirror—\$29.99 through \$60.00. Programmable Random Flashes—\$40.00. Rotating Color Wheel—\$15.00.

#### **DEEJAY**

You or a friend can be the deejay. Or, for a school party, you probably know, or can easily find through the disco grapevine, a deejay with records and equipment, whose services you can rent for a night. "It's important," says DiSernia, "to check their references. You don't necessarily have to see them on the job, but call the people who've used their services. See if they were polite, on time, and if they played the kind of music that kept people dancing. You want to make sure the deejay has the latest and most popular music that is being danced to in your town. If the music is too obscure and strange, people will not dance to it. He may also

have great music, but he may not have bought a new record in six months." Your local disco radio station offers a good barometer of what's most popular, as does *Billboard* magazine.

#### MUSIC

The folks at Disco Van 2000 caution against using a prepared tape. "It's the lazy man's way of doing a party. It's better to buy your ten favorite albums and don't mix them, than to use a tape. You're stuck with a tape. It's got no relation to the mood of the party. People don't want to dance to a tape."

## SETTING UP

Don't make a separate room for food and beverages. "No matter how discofied people are, they are shy to start dancing. Food and drink will bring them into the room."

Do provide another room for those who want some momentary peace and quiet.

Make sure you've got a danceable surface to move and groove on—hardwood, yes; carpeting, no; linoleum, too slippery.

Raising your speakers off the floor will help keep that disco sound from spreading to the neighbors below if you live in an apartment. So will covering your windows with blankets.

Be sure to secure all lamp and speaker wires with masking tape, so you don't have dancers tripping over them in the strobelit darkness.

Leave a clear path to the front door.

Leave some space for people to sit, where they won't get trampled.

Make sure your parents will be home all evening and make sure they like to dance too.



## DONNA SUMMER

The name Donna Summer has become synonymous with the word disco. Just as Elvis is The King. Donna is Disco. Donna achieved this pinnacle of recognizability on the wings of one song, the incomparable "Love to Love You Baby." Far from being a typical one-night disco sensation, she's more than sustained her frenzied reputation by coming up with



asablanca Records

the no less compelling "Last Dance," by now a disco classic. She followed that with another, the stunning, if odd, remake of "MacArthur Park." The curiosity here stems from Donna's rather odd decision to modify the particular hobby of those old men in the park from checkers to Chinese checkers. Did you ever see old men playing Chinese checkers in any park? Checkers, yes, chess, definitely. But Chinese checkers? A mere slip of the tongue on Summer's part? Or will this lead to further liberties with lyrics in the future? Will Bob Seger's "Hollywood Nights" turn into "Hong Kong Nights"? Will Paul Simon's "Me and Julio Down by the Schoolyard," come out "Mao and Tao Down by the Yang-tze"? We will obviously have to keep our eyes on this Boston-born lady whose first big break came in the German version of Hair!



## THE BEE GEES

By now the fact is long forgotten that the Bee Gees started out as just another bunch of brothers. They engaged in open competition with the Beatles, who won out (probably due to the fact that

they weren't related to each other). Anyway, by the top of the seventies, Barry, Robin, and Maurice had run out of high-harmony hits (such as "Massachusetts," "Holiday," "Got to Get a Message to You," "I Started a Joke," and "To Love Somebody"), had split up, run aground ... and reunited. (Andy, meanwhile, was still grappling with shaving.)

Nobody quite knows how or why the Bee Gees stumbled into the discothèque, although everyone agrees the sound track for Saturday Night Fever was the beginning of their renaissance. Since the film, the Gibb family has virtually owned the top-ten chart, occasionally leasing a number 6 to Billy Joel, a number 4 to Fleetwood Mac, and a song to UNICEF, just to show what jolly good chaps they are.



# DR. BUZZARD'S ORIGINAL SAVANNAH BAND

One of the first of the Second Coming of disco bands. Combined Hollywood camp with New York City nightlife, a touch of Latin class. The personification of the Retro look, years before it reemerged. Their big single, "Cherchez La Femme," gave the disco movement another big kick forward.

#### **EVELYN "CHAMPAGNE" KING**

Details are sketchy about this young lady's early career. At 18 years old, how much of an early career could she have had? Legend has it, though, that she was discovered while working as a cleaning lady at a record company in Philadelphia - singing while she mopped! Quite a Cinderella story for a girl born in the Bronx. And now she's got a gold single "Shame," off the album Smooth Talk. (And you thought disco didn't have soul.) While authorities are divided as to how she came by her "bubbly" nickname, having an uncle starring in the Broadway play Bubbling Brown Sugar might certainly answer a few questions and raise a few others.





#### **TAVARES**

The five Tavares brothers hail from New Bedford, Massachusetts. Since 1973 they have released eight albums and scores of singles, including "More Than a Woman," from Saturday Night Fever. They were the first to give Daryl Hall & John Oates a national showcase when they made "She's Gone," a sizeable hit in 1975. Their best song is probably "Heaven Must be Missing an Angel." Coming from a family of ten children, Ralph, Arthur, Antoine, Feliciano, and Perry Lee learned early what it's like to be faces in the crowd. It took them nine years of knocking on coors before they got their first taste of success.

#### CHIC

Currently just about the hottest thing going on the disco front, with their second big hit in a row, "Le Freak," the follow-up to



their catchy smash of last year "Dance, Dance, Dance (Yowsah, Yowsah, Yowsah)." Contrary to popular opinion, the group actually does exist. It is the brainchild of Bernard Edwards and Nile Rodgers, two stellar musicians and arrangers with a host of impressive credentials in the world of electrified funk. The original lead singer was Norma Jean Wright, who left the group to try a solo career. Replacing her is Alfa Anderson, who handles singing chores along with Luci Martin. So far, both of Chic's albums have gone gold. So whether you're listening to Chic or C'est Chic, you know you're listening to the best in disco.

#### CERRONE

Like so many people of European origin, Cerrone is generally identified by last name only. placing him among such hallowed company as Hildegarde, Napoleon, Liberace, Clarabelle, Fabian, and Twiggy. As it turns out, his first name, Jean-Marc, is certainly nothing to write home about. What you can write home about, fortunately, is his music. The man is a disco producer extraordinaire, making use of the best musicians in



Atlantic Records

Europe for his much-acclaimed albums—Paradise, Super Nature, and The Golden Touch, all of which are million sellers. Since he's now only twenty-seven, Cerrone should be a force in disco, here and there, for at least another eleven years.

## **TRAMMPS**

You remember the Trammps from their hot rendition of "Disco Inferno," from Saturday Night Fever. But even before that, the group had been voted by the number one trade magazine, Billboard, as the top disco group of the year (1976). Their debut album, Where the Happy People Go, was voted best disco album of the year by Nightfall magazine. Back in 1965, when disco was



just an itch in some producer's toes, the Trammps were known as the Tornadoes, with lead singer Jimmy Ellis and Robert Upchurch and bassman Earl Young strutting their stuff on a tune called "Storm Warning," which went nowhere.

## **GLORIA GAYNOR**

The title of her latest hit record, "I Will Survive," really tells the story as far as Gloria is concerned. Back in 1975 she was named (by then Mayor Beame of New York City) Queen of Disco, in tribute to her fifteen-minute version of "Never Can Say Goodbye."



Since then, the Newark, New Jersey, lady has been toiling on the disco round in search of an appropriately monstrous follow-up. Not only that, Gloria has survived an early career in Accounting. Thanks to "I Will Survive," *The Disco Handbook* can safely say that she's reclaimed her title!

#### PETER BROWN

Peter is widely known as the man who made his first disco album in his bedroom. (One thing to do on a Friday night if you don't



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know how to dance.) Actually, with all the equipment he had set up in there, the synthesizers, drums, pianos, mikes, and 4-track tape recorder, he probably had to sleep in the kitchen, which is a good guess as to why he called his first album Fantasy Love Affair. And, in fact, only the original demos were made in his bedroom. The real album was made at a real studio in Florida, through the courtesy of TK Records. What is also purely fantastic is that the record ultimately went gold, and Peter was named outstanding new disco performer of 1977 by Record World magazine. Peter is 25 years old and lives in Chicago, and, most likely, still sleeps in the kitchen.



ere is a basic foundation of disco discs and albums, upon which to build your ultimate disco library.

Bee Gees & others (RSO Records)	SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER
Donna Summer (Casablanca Records)	FOUR SEASONS OF LOVE LOVE TO LOVE YOU BABY LIVE AND MORE
Chic (Atlantic Records)	DANCE, DANCE, DANCE C'EST CHIC
George Macrae (single) (TK Records)	"ROCK YOUR BABY"
Isaac Hayes (Stax Records)	HOT BUTTERED SOUL
Barry White (20th Century Records)	NEVER GONNA GIVE YOU UP
Tavares (single) (Capitol Records)	"HEAVEN MUST BE MISSING AN ANGEL"

Vicki Sue Robinson (single) (RCA Records)	"TURN THE BEAT AROUND"
Silver Convention (single) (Midsong International)	"FLY ROBIN, FLY"
K.C. & the Sunshine Band (single) (TK Records)	"GET DOWN TONIGHT"
Andrea True Connection (single) (Buddah Records)	"MORE, MORE, MORE"
Dr. Buzzard's Original Savannah Band (RCA Records)	DR. BUZZARD MEETS KING PENNET
Rose Royce (single) (Warner Brothers Records)	"CARWASH"
Cerrone	PARADISE
(Atlantic Records)	SUPERNATURE
Funkadelic (Warner Brothers Records)	ONE NATION UNDER A GROOVE
Village People (Casablanca Records)	VILLAGE PEOPLE MACHO MAN CRUISIN
Trammps (Atlantic Records)	BEST OF
Salsoul Orchestra (Salsoul Records)	NICE N' NASTY GREATEST DISCO HITS
Robin Gibb & Muppets (Sesame Street Records)	SESAME STREET FEVER
Evelyn "Champagne" King (RCA Records)	SMOOTH TALK
Van McCoy (single) (MCA Records)	"THE HUSTLE"
GLORIA GAYNOR (single) (Polydor Records)	"NEVER CAN SAY GOODBYE"

Peter Brown (TK Records)	FANTASY LOVE AFFAIR
Chaka Kahn (Warner Brothers Records)	CHAKA
Chubby Checker (Parkway Records)	THE TWIST
Sylvester (Fantasy Records)	STEP II
Musique (Prelude Records)	KEEP ON JUMPIN'









Disco Fever—It's more than just music! It's a language, a fashion, a lifestyle, the new scene of the decade! Find out the facts, the fantasy, and the fun of it! Get to know disco "types," disco "lingo," disco superstars! Let THE DISCO HANDBOOK be your "guide to stayin' alive in the eighties!" With loads of photos and cartoons and "Pick Up Your Feet"—a free disco record.